

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FOR EUR/NE AT OOB MARCH 15.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR OVIP (COSGRAVE, LIAM) US, EI.

SUBJ: OFFICIAL VISIT TO US OF IRISH PRIME MINISTER COSGRAVE -
RESPONSE TO PRESIDENTS WELCOMING REMARKS.

1. QUOTED BELOW IS PM COSGRAVE'S RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT FORD'S
WELCOMING REMARKS ON WHITE HOUSE LAWN MARCH 17. REMARKS EMBARGOED
TIO 3/17.

2. BEGIN QUOTE

WE WERE DEEPLY HONoured TO RECEIVE YOUR INVITATION TO MAKE
AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES AND TO BE WITH THE
PEOPLE OF AMERICA AS THEY CELEBRATE THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. IT IS PARTICULARLY
APPROPRIATE THAT OUR VISIT SHOULD COMMENCE ON ST. PATRICK'S
DAY WHICH HAS AN ESPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR IRELAND AND INDEED
ALSO FOR THE UNITED STATES. IT IS ALSO A GREAT PERSONAL
PLEASURE FOR US TO BE HERE IN THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY OF WASHINGTON
WHERE WE HAVE SO MANY FRIENDS.

FOR ME, MR. PRESIDENT, TODAY HAS A FURTHER PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE.
ALMOST HALF A CENTURY AGO, IN 1928, MY FATHER, WILLIAM T. COSGRAVE,
THEN HEAD OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT, VISITED THIS COUNTRY ACCOMPANIED
BY HIS MINISTER FOR DEFENSE, MR. DESMOND FITZGERALD WHOSE SON,
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DR. GARRET FITZGERALD, IS FOREIGN MINISTER IN MY GOVERNMENT, AND

IS WITH ME HERE TODAY. I WONDER WHETHER IN THE HISTORY OF SUCH VISITS TO THIS GREAT COUNTRY, THERE HAS BEEN ANY PARALLEL. I AM INDEED GRATIFIED THAT HISTORY SHOULD HAVE REPEATED ITSELF ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION.

WE ARE INDEED GREATLY HONOURED TO HAVE BEEN INVITED HERE DURING YOUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR, A YEAR WHICH HIGHLIGHTS THE REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THIS TRULY GREAT NATION. WE ARE PROUD THAT THROUGHOUT AMERICAN HISTORY THE IRISH PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CLOSELY INVOLVED WITH YOUR GREAT ENDEAVOURS. WHAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED AND THE IDEALS FOR WHICH YOU STAND HAVE SERVED AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION TO US IN THE EARLY YEARS HAVE NOT LESSENED WITH TIME. ON THE CONTRARY, I BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE TODAY STRONGER AND FIRMER THAN EVER.

MR. PRESIDENT, ON THIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY, IN THIS HISTORIC YEAR, IT IS, I THINK, APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO BRING YOU A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF IRELAND. TODAY, WHEN THE CHALLENGES WHICH CONFRONT US IN ALMOST EVERY FIELD OF OUR ACTIVITIES, BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL, APPEAR DAUNTING, IT IS TIMELY TO REFLECT ON THIS DEDICATION OF OUR FOREBEARS, TO WHOM WE OWE SO MUCH. IN IRELAND, WE LOOK BACK OVER A THOUSAND YEARS AND MORE TO THE WORK OF ST. PATRICK AND THOSE WHO FOLLOWED HIM, WHO KEPT ALIGHT IN EUROPE DURING THE CENTURIES OF THE DARK AGES THE TORCH OF CIVILISATION. THEY WERE MEN OF PEACE, IN TIMES OF VIOLENCE. THEIR PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND TRUTH ARE PART OF OUR HERITAGE. THEY REMAIN THE VALUES BY WHICH WE MUST SEEK TO CONDUCT OUR AFFAIRS TODAY. THESE PRINCIPLES ARE ENSHRINED IN THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND IRELAND HAS PLEDGED ITS ENDEAVOURS TOWARDS THEIR OBSERVANCE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

MR. PRESIDENT, I AM DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR WARM WELCOME AND I AM CERTAIN THAT THIS VISIT WILL FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE WARM BONDS OF SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP WHICH HAVE ALWAYS CHARACTERISED THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

MR. PRESIDENT, THERE ARE MANY ANCIENT TRADITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH ST. PATRICK'S DAY, AND ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN OF THESE IS THE WEARING OF THE SHAMROCK, WHICH HAS A SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IRISH PEOPLE BOTH AT HOME AND IN THE COUNTRIES OF THEIR ADOPTION. TODAY, WHICH IS SYMBOLIC OF SO MUCH THAT THE IRISH AND AMERICAN PEOPLE SHARE IN COMMON, IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO PRESENT TO YOU, ON BEHALF OF THE IRISH PEOPLE, THIS GIFT OF SHAMROCK WHICH WE HAVE BROUGHT WITH US.

END QUOTE
CURLEY

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